

CONFIDENTIAL

~~SECRET~~

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

5 October 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Yugoslavia's Foreign Policy Position

SUMMARY

Our view of Yugoslavia's international position and foreign policies was described in NIE 15-61, "The Outlook for Yugoslavia," dated 23 May 1961. We still subscribe to this basic view. However, Tito's behavior at the Belgrade Conference points up the fact that the Yugoslavs take their good relations with, and aid from, the West very much for granted. It also demonstrates, we believe, that in a situation of mounting tension Yugoslavia cannot be counted upon to do any significant service for Western policy.

25X1

DOCUMENT NO. 36
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S ☒
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 1990
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 23/6/80 REVIEWER:

~~SECRET~~

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET

DISCUSSION

1. Tito's apparent pro-Soviet performance at the Belgrade Conference aroused much indignation in the West. His behavior raises questions concerning Yugoslavia's present relations with both the Bloc and the West, and in particular about the course it intends to pursue and the way it will use its influence among neutralist states during the present sharper phase of East-West confrontation.

2. Our view of Yugoslavia's international position and foreign policies was described in NIE 15-61, "The Outlook for Yugoslavia," dated 23 May 1961. Briefly, we said that the Yugoslav leaders, though Communist, were determined to retain the independence and freedom of maneuver they acquired as a result of their separation from the Bloc. Essentially, this was the basis for their "non-Bloc" foreign policy, under which they have striven to get as much material help as they could from both Blocs, without becoming too deeply involved with either. This policy has also led the Yugoslavs to place their greatest effort in foreign policy on cultivating ties with the under-developed, or "uncommitted" group of nations, among which Belgrade

SECRET

aspires to a leadership position. At the same time, the Yugoslavs remain Communists, and are predisposed to see socialism as good and capitalism as bad. This doctrinaire outlook, together with their desire to identify themselves with the desires of the "uncommitted" nations, leads the Yugoslavs, more often than not, to take positions on international questions which are in opposition to those of the West and which frequently correspond with Soviet positions.

3. At the same time, they are, we believe, genuinely determined to maintain their independence from the Communist Bloc. At the same time, however, they hope that the Bloc, under the "progressive" leadership of Khrushchev, will change and, to quote from NIE 15-61, will become "a looser grouping of genuinely autonomous Communist states with which they can again associate themselves." They probably do not believe that such changes are imminent. They recognize that at present the Bloc states are in violent disagreement over whether to treat Yugoslavia as a capitalist, imperialist stooge (the Chinese and Albanian view), or as a "socialist" country which has only gone astray, and can eventually be persuaded to correct or discard its erroneous ideological outlook and rejoin the Bloc under Soviet leadership (the Soviet view). Though the

- 3 -

SECRET

SECRET

Yugoslavs agree with neither (they refuse to budge from their heretical ideological outlook), they consider the Soviet view as the lesser evil and, as we said in NIE 15-61, "they continue to hope that a time will arrive when they can play a larger role in international Communist affairs without jeopardizing their independence."

4. Prior to the Belgrade Conference there was reason to expect that on a number of key international issues, the Yugoslavs would reflect views at the conference which corresponded more with Soviet than with Western positions. Not long before the conference, Tito explained at length to Ambassador Kennan why the Yugoslavs opposed the Western policy on Germany and sympathized with the Soviet position (though not necessarily with Soviet methods of pressing it). Nevertheless, Ambassador Kennan was given to understand before the conference that, despite this Yugoslav attitude, Tito would strive at the conference for moderation, and in his speeches would not say things which would heighten international tension or prejudice the Berlin situation.

5. In view of these assurances, observers at the conference were taken aback when in his second speech to the conference, on 3 September, Tito shed his moderate posture and took extreme

- 4 -

SECRET

SECRET

pro-Soviet positions on a number of issues. In particular, far from criticizing the Soviet announcement of nuclear test resumption, except its timing in relation to the conference, Tito blamed France and said he "could understand the reasons" for the Soviet decision. Western observers were also surprised at the undisguised support, in Tito's speech, for the Soviet position on the Berlin question, and his savage criticism of Western policy on Germany. It was also noted that Tito identified himself with the usually anti-Western positions of the "uncommitted" nations of Africa and Asia, that he criticized such Western organizations as OECD, and that, in recommending the channeling of economic aid through the UN, he had some critical words for bilateral economic co-operation, which he said "frequently embodies a considerable number of negative elements, such as rivalry, interference in domestic affairs, imposition of political influence and the like."

6. As Ambassador Kennan put it, it was not so much the substantive positions in the speech, most of which were not new. What was unpleasant, from the Western point of view, was that, on such an occasion, at such a critical period of international tension, Tito should choose to present his views in such a manner. This, it was said, outraged the propriety which should have been

- 5 -

SECRET

SECRET

exercised by the host, and violated the assurances made to the US Ambassador and others only a day or so before that Tito's speech would be moderate and noncontroversial, much as his opening speech has been. In addition, the US Embassy was subsequently informed that the Yugoslavs had pressed hard for their views in the closed conferences; moreover, they kept US representatives isolated from the Congolese delegation and hindered US efforts to influence the delegates.

7. Ambassador Kennan feels that an important change occurred between Tito's first speech, of 1 September, and his second of 3 September, and notes that the Soviet Ambassador conferred with Tito at the airport on 31 August, immediately before the Soviet announcement that nuclear tests would be resumed. As reasons for the change, Kennan accepts, to some extent, the reasons advanced by the Yugoslavs -- i.e., that the actions were designed to support Khrushchev against his (unspecified) "opponents."* Certainly the Yugoslavs are aware of the division of view among the Bloc countries concerning Yugoslavia, and they desire to act, where possible, in

* The Yugoslavs, with their long experience of Stalinism, are highly prone to believe that Khrushchev is recurrently embattled and that, if he loses, far-reaching and dangerous policy changes will occur.

SECRET

SECRET

a manner which will enable Khrushchev to justify to critics his moderate approach to Belgrade. Ambassador Kennan feels something more is involved with respect to Yugoslav-Bloc relations, perhaps in response to an increased Soviet disposition, manifested during the recent Popovic visit, to acknowledge Yugoslavia's independent position.

8. Our own view is that there was indeed more involved than support for Khrushchev in Tito's sudden switch in behavior. One suggestion, which we think has merit, is that Tito, seeing Nehru taking over the limelight and assuming the leadership of the conference, took his extreme line in order to identify himself with, and to secure a leading position within, the more radical group of "neutral" nations. In addition, however, we feel that the Soviet announcement of test resumption, communicated to him personally by the Soviet Ambassador, really frightened Tito over the danger of war, and his reaction may have been that if the extreme calamity were to be avoided, he must try to rally the "uncommitted" countries to force negotiations between the great powers favorable to the Soviet position on Berlin, with which he had long been in agreement.

- 7 -

SECRET

SECRET

9. Certainly Moscow seems pleased with his behavior. Subsequent to the conference, in a calculated manner which suggests strongly that it was a quid pro quo, Khrushchev referred to Yugoslavia, in his Sulzberger interview, as a "socialist country." This was an important ideological gesture for the Soviet leader to make, and one long-awaited in Belgrade. The draft Soviet party program had contained no such ideological concessions -- in fact it treated the Yugoslavs rather badly (see our Memorandum for the Director, "Recent Developments in Soviet-Yugoslav Relations," dated 10 August 1961). Moreover, the savagely hostile views of Peking and Tirana have been emphatically reaffirmed after the Belgrade Conference, and this has doubtless enhanced Yugoslav satisfaction with Khrushchev's gesture.

10. Recent articles in the Yugoslav press have shown what appears to be increased confidence in commenting on Sino-Soviet differences. An apparent recent disposition by Khrushchev (e.g., during the Popovic visit) to give greater acknowledgement to Yugoslav independence may have encouraged the Yugoslavs, always eager for closer relations with the Bloc (on Yugoslav terms), to feel sanguine about an increased role in international Communist affairs. For their part the Soviets may indeed be inclined to grant greater recognition to Yugoslav independence, in a play to

SECRET

make greater use, for their own purposes, of Yugoslav influence among the newer, more radical group of "neutrals."

11. Beyond this, events in the months to come, especially in relation to the Soviet Party Congress, should reveal whether an improvement in party relations is in store.* Indicators of important change would be favorable treatment of Yugoslavia in the approved version of the Soviet Party Program, attendance by accredited Yugoslav delegates or "observers" at the Party Congress, or Yugoslav signature of a Bloc "peace treaty" with East Germany. For the present, however, Soviet publications continue to criticize Yugoslav revisionism, and the Yugoslavs themselves are about to recodify their heresies flamboyantly in their new constitution. Thus, aside from a slight improvement in the state sphere, no important change has yet occurred in Bloc-Yugoslav relations.

12. We believe that Tito's behavior at the conference, in particular the "switch" between his first and second speeches, does demonstrate that Yugoslavia's "neutrality" on occasion manifests itself actively against the interests of the West. We also

* It should be noted here that, though the Yugoslavs have refused an invitation to an upcoming WFTU meeting in East Berlin, they have accepted an invitation to attend the WFTU Congress in Moscow next December as "observers."

SECRET

SECRET

believe that this performance brings home what should have been apparent long before -- that the Yugoslavs have been taking their good relations with the West, including the continued receipt of economic aid, very much for granted. Aside from this, we see no reason to alter our basic analysis of the Yugoslav international position, as expressed in NIE 15-61. It has become clearer, however, that in a situation of mounting tension the Yugoslavs cannot be counted upon to do any significant service for Western policy. This is due in fact to the persistence of their ideological bias, and in part to their desire to extend their influence among the radical nationalists and anticolonialists among the uncommitted states who are in turn strongly influenced by Soviet views.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES



for SHERMAN KENT
Chairman

25X1

- 10 -

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

REPRODUCTION DATA

FROM: WCM
SUBJECT: Memo for DCI - Yugoslavians
Foreign Policy Position
DISTRIBUTION: Memo for DCI

Supplemental Distribution: _____

TIME REQUESTED: At your convenience, 6 Oct 61
JUSTIFICATION:

CONFIDENTIAL